

# Discrimination in the housing market is hindering successful integration

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Males with Arabic names confront discrimination in the rental housing market in Finland. According to a study conducted at Åbo Akademi University, individuals with an Arabic name —males, in particular—were considerably less likely to receive a response from potential landlords. Only 16 percent of inquiries signed with a male Arabic name received responses, whereas inquiries with a female Finnish name received responses in 42 percent of cases. The study is a part of the research project Intra-Genomic Conflicts and Social Decision-Making in Humans.

In the study, a total of 1,459 inquiries regarding vacant rental apartments across Finland were sent out during 2016. The inquiries were sent via e-mail and signed with different names. The responses were compared in terms of the different study groups—women and men with an Arabic, Finnish or Swedish names. The results showed that males with Arabic names received fewer responses in comparison to any other group. No other statistical differences between these six groups were found. Overall, men received responses less frequently than women, and inquiries signed with an Arabic name less frequently than those signed with a Finnish or Swedish name. The landlord's gender had no effect on the results.

Previous research has shown that discrimination increases the affected individuals' risk of developing psychological problems, and that ethnic [discrimination](#) in the housing market is hindering successful integration. The findings corroborate the importance of the current study. The study

was conducted at Åbo Akademi University by Annamaria Öblom for her Master's thesis in Psychology and published in *PLOS ONE*. The study is the first of its kind concerning the private rental [housing](#) market in Finland.

**More information:** Annamaria Öblom et al, Ethnic and gender discrimination in the private rental housing market in Finland: A field experiment, *PLOS ONE* (2017). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0183344](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0183344)

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